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ancient history and fame of his family. It is a matter connected with the past, a matter of the mind, a source of pride to him to have such a possession, but a matter that does not affect his daily life.

So far as could be learnt, the Bella Coola crests consist of the following birds and animals: raven, bald eagle, grizzly bear, black bear, wolf, whale, blackfish, merganser, loon, *skämtsk*, possibly deer, and the mythical double-headed snake, *sisiutl*. To these must be added the sun, because some of the original people came to earth in human form by sliding down his eye-lashes, the sun-beams; and *nulinikta*, the posts which stretched from earth to the land above, down which a number of the first ancestors of mankind swarmed in human form. The Bella Coola believe that these posts are particularly common memorials among the tribes of the outer coast. According to some accounts it was these posts which supported the first sky until it fell.

A crest is connected almost exclusively with the distant past. A Bella Coola whose ancestor came to earth as a raven pays no attention to the ravens of the present time. The matter was approached from every possible angle and not the slightest sign of respect toward living specimens of a man's crest could be noticed. A query as to whether or not a man refrained from eating his crest was regarded as highly humorous. Nor is there any trace of fellowship between unrelated families even if they happen to have the same crest. The subject was broached repeatedly, until at last one informant smiled broadly and said:

"I know now what you want to find out, I can tell you all about it."

He recounted how the Kitkatla are, in his opinion, stupid enough to regard as brothers all those who have the same animal story even if they are members of different tribes. He said that when he was a young man at Victoria, where Indians from all parts of the coast used to meet, a Kitkatla had once asked him what was his animal. He was puzzled, but as the

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424 nearest answer to the question replied that his *crest* was the Raven. The Kitkatla was a Raven man, too, and to the 779 narrator's surprise, treated him as a brother for the rest of his 825 stay in Victoria. He shook with laughter as he recalled the experience, and added that though he was quite willing to accept favours of this kind he would never dream of returning them. It can be stated unhesitatingly that the Bella Coola have no totemic beliefs concerning their crests. There is not [582] the slightest trace of respect towards the animal, nor yet of exogamy.

211 Although crests are not objects of religious veneration, yet they have some importance in the realm of social life. The 424 portrayal of one serves to indicate ownership of an ancestral 773 myth describing that particular bird or animal. A wealthy 825 chief is proud to display his crest on a totem-pole, or as a painting on the front wall of his house. Anyone seeing such a [532] design is impressed with the glories of the family history of [556] the owner, to the latter's gratification. A living specimen of [304] the bird or animal is treated with no respect, but its delineation is a memento of family history. For that reason a man is often tattooed[*] with his crest, that derived from his father's first ancestor on the right breast, that from his mother, on the left; and the owner of a canoe often carves his crest on its bow. After the death of a chief a memorial-post is erected near his grave, decorated with a painting or carving of one or more crests to remind observers not only of the deceased, but of his 000 family history, his most treasured possession. It is said, half

[171] [184] [*]It is said that tattooing was formerly customary not only among all the coastal tribes but also the Carriers. Both Bella Coola men and women decorated themselves in this way, but the custom was not universal, and is said never to have been common. It is believed that Haida chiefs tattooed themselves in connection with potlatches; in Bella Coola this was not the case although the operation was performed within the back-room of the patient's house. Two methods were employed. The first was by puncturing the skin with a needle smeared with colouring material; the second and less common, by passing a string coated with the substance beneath [386] the skin. The dye was obtained from river stones which were baked for a long time and then ground into a powder. This keeps indefinitely and can be made ready for use by mixing with water. As far as could be learnt, any skilled craftsman might perform the operation.